6.3 Communication

FM processes, like the tasks introduced in Part I, cannot share data directly. Instead, they coordinate their execution and exchange data by sending and receiving messages on single-producer, single-consumer channels and multiple-producer, single-consumer mergers. Hence, the next step in program implementation after processes have been defined is to establish the channels and mergers needed for communication.

In this section, we focus on the constructs and techniques used to specify structured, ``synchronous'' communication operations (Section 2.3). In subsequent sections we examine both unstructured and asynchronous communication.

6.3.1 Creating Channels

The basic building block from which communication structures are constructed is the channel, created by executing the `CHANNEL` statement. This statement has the general form

`CHANNEL(in=` *inport*, `out=` *outport* `)`

and both creates a new channel and defines *inport* and *outport* to be references to this channel, with *inport* able to receive messages and *outport* able to send messages. The two ports must be of the same type.

Optional `iostat=` and `err=` specifiers can be used to detect error conditions, as in Fortran file input/output statements. An `err=` *`label`* specifier causes execution to continue at the statement with the specified *label* if an error occurs while creating the channel. An `iostat=` *`intval`* specifier causes the integer variable *intval* to be set to zero if no error occurs and to a nonzero value otherwise. If neither `err=` nor `iostat=` specifiers are provided, an error causes the FM computation to terminate.

For succinctness, we use Fortran 90 *array sections* in the `CHANNEL` statement. An array section is like an array element but with a range rather than an index provided for one or more of its subscripts. A range is represented by a triplet with the following general form. *lower-bound* : *upper-bound* : *stride*

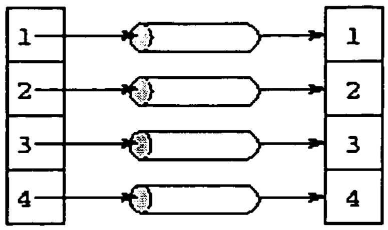
Bounds can be omitted if the corresponding bounds of the array are required; a stride of 1 is assumed if *stride* is omitted. See Figure 7.1 in Chapter 7 for examples of array sections.

Array sections provided in the `in=` and `out=` components of a `CHANNEL` statement must be *conformant*, that is, of the same size and shape. A channel is created for each pair of corresponding elements, as illustrated in Figure 6.1.

(a)

```
OUTPORT (integer) po(4)
INPORT  (integer) pi(4)

CHANNEL(out=po(:), in=pi(:))
```



(b)

```
OUTPORT (integer) qo(4)
INPORT  (integer) qi(4)

CHANNEL(out=qo(2:4), in=qi(1:3))
CHANNEL(out=qo(1), in=qi(4))
```

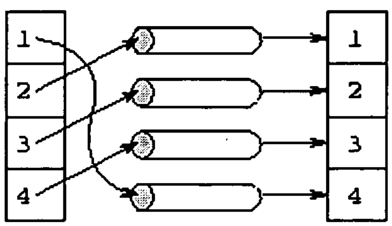


Figure 6.1: *Array sections and the FM* `CHANNEL` *statement. In (a), a single statement creates four channels and, for i=1..4 , defines outport* `po( i )` *and inport* `pi( i )` *to reference the same channel. Hence, for example, a message sent on* `po(1)` *can be received on* `pi(1)`*. In (b), two statements are used to define a ``staggered" mapping of inports to outports, in which outport* `qo(mod( i ,4)+1)` *and inport* `qi( i )` *reference the same channel. Therefore, a message sent on* `qo(1)` *can be received on* `qi(4)`*.*

6.3.2 Sending Messages

A process sends a message by applying the `SEND` statement to an outport. Doing this adds the message to the message queue associated with the outport, with the outport declaration specifying the message format. For example, in the following code fragment the `SEND` statement sends a message consisting of the integer `i` followed by the first ten elements of the real array `a`.

```
OUTPORT (integer, real x(10)) po
...
SEND(po) i, a
```

A process sends a sequence of messages by repeated calls to `SEND`; it can also call `ENDCHANNEL` to send an end-of-channel (EOC) message. This usage is illustrated in Program 6.1, where the `foundry` process uses the `SEND` and `ENDCHANNEL` statements to send a total of 100 integer messages. `ENDCHANNEL` also sets the value of the outport variable to be `NULL`, thereby preventing further messages from being sent on that port.

Like Fortran's `write` and `endfile` statements, `SEND` and `ENDCHANNEL` are nonblocking (asynchronous);

that is, they complete immediately. Variables named in a `SEND` statement can be modified in subsequent statements, without affecting the send operation.

An operation on an undefined port is treated as erroneous. Optional `err=` and `iostat=` specifiers (described in Section 6.3.1) can be included in `SEND` and `ENDCHANNEL` statements to indicate how to recover from this and other exceptional conditions.

6.3.3 Receiving Messages

A process receives a value by applying the `RECEIVE` statement to an inport. The inport declaration specifies the message format. For example, the `bridge` process in Program 6.1 makes repeated calls to the `RECEIVE` statement to receive a sequence of integer messages, detecting end-of-sequence by using the `iostat` specifier. A `RECEIVE` statement is blocking (synchronous); that is, it does not complete until data is available. Hence, a consumer process such as `bridge` cannot ``run ahead'' of the corresponding producer.

An array size can be included in a message, thereby allowing arrays of different sizes to be communicated on the same channel. For example, the following code fragment receives a message comprising the integer `num` followed by `num` real values. The incoming data are placed in array elements `a(1,offset), a(1,offset+1), ..., a(1,offset+num-1)`.

```
    INPORT (integer n, real x(n)) pi
    integer num
    real a(128, 128)
    RECEIVE(pi) num, a(1,offset)
```

An operation on an undefined port is treated as erroneous. A `RECEIVE` statement can include optional `err=` and `iostat=` specifiers to indicate how to recover from this and various exceptional conditions. In addition, an `end=` *`label`* specifier causes execution to continue at the statement with the specified *label* upon receipt of a end-of-channel message. This mechanism can be used to rewrite the `bridge` process of Program 6.1 as follows.

```
          PROCESS bridge(pi)                              ! Process de
          INPORT (integer) pi                             ! Argument:
          integer num                                     ! Local vari
          do while(.true.)                                ! While not
                RECEIVE(port=pi, end=10) num              !
                call use_girder(num)                      !
          enddo                                           !
 10       end                                         ! End of process
```

Example 6.2 Ring Pipeline:

Program 6.2 implements the ring-based pairwise interactions algorithm of Section 1.4.2. It comprises a main program and a process definition. The main program uses two channel statements to create `P` channels (Figure 6.1) and a process do-loop to create `P` processes. One inport and one outport are passed to each process as arguments, thereby connecting the processes in a unidirectional ring (Figure 6.2). The variables `i` and `P` are also passed to the processes as arguments; this capability is discussed in Section 6.7.

The `ringnode` process's four arguments are a unique identifier, the total number of processes, and an inport and outport referencing channels from one neighbor and to the other neighbor in the ring. The process first initializes its local state and then performs `n-1` send-receive-compute steps before terminating.

```
program ring                                 ! Main program
integer P                                    !
parameter (P=3)                              ! P processes
INPORT (real x(3)) pi(P)                     ! Inport declarations
OUTPORT (real x(3)) po(P)                    ! Outport declarations
CHANNEL(in=pi(1:P-1), out=po(2:P))           ! P-1 channels
CHANNEL(in=pi(P), out=po(1))                 ! Pth channel
PROCESSDO i = 1,P                            ! Create processes
  PROCESSCALL ringnode(i, P, pi(i), po(i))
ENDPROCESSDO                                 ! Block until done
end                                          ! End of program

PROCESS ringnode(i, p, left, right)          ! Code for single node
INPORT (real x(3)) left                      ! Inport (from left)
OUTPORT (real x(3)) right                    ! Outport (to right)
integer i, p                                 !
real state(3), forces(3), msg(3)             ! Local variables
call initstate(i, state)                     ! Initialization
call copy(state, msg)                        !
call zero(forces)                            !
do j = 1, p-1                                ! Repeat P-1 times:
  SEND(right) msg                            !  Send to right
  RECEIVE(left) msg                          !  Receive from left
  call updateforces(msg, state, forces)!      Compute
enddo                                        !
end                                          ! End of process
```

Program 6.2 : FM implementation of ring pipeline.

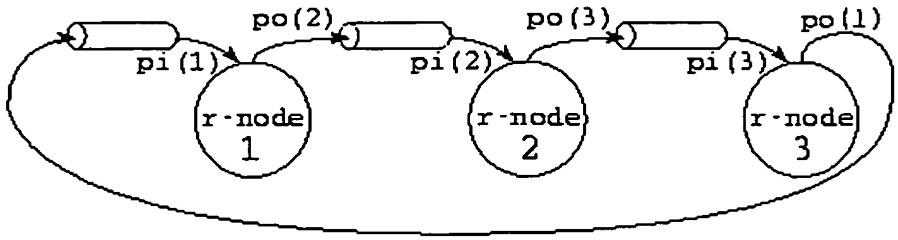


Figure 6.2: *FM implementation of three-process ring pipeline showing channel connections.*

Example 6.3 Search:

Program 6.3 implements a prototypical tree-structured computation. The program explores a binary tree recursively in the manner of Algorithm 1.1, creating a task for each tree node and returning the total number of leaf nodes that represent solutions. In this simple program, the tree is not represented by an explicit data structure; instead, a process's position in the tree is represented by an integer.

The main program makes an initial call to the process `tree`. This process uses a process block to create recursively a set of $2n-1$ (n a power of 2) processes connected in a binary tree of depth $\log n$. Each process is connected to its parent by a channel; nonleaf processes also have channels from their two offspring. Notice the use of a subroutine call within a process block, as discussed in Section 6.2.2.

```
program fm_tree_example                   ! Main program
INPORT (real) pi                          ! Inport
OUTPORT (real) po                         ! Outport
CHANNEL(in=pi, out=po)                    ! Create channel
PROCESSES                                 ! Create processes:
  PROCESSCALL root(pi)                    !   Root of tree
  PROCESSCALL tree(0, 128, po)            !   Tree
ENDPROCESSES                              ! Block until done
end                                       ! End of program

PROCESS tree(id, n, toparent)             ! Process definition
integer id                                ! Process identifier
integer n                                 ! Number of processes
OUTPORT (real) toparent                   ! Outport to parent
INPORT (real) li, ri                      ! Ports for children
OUTPORT (real) lo, ro                     ! Ports for children
if(n .gt. 1) then                         ! If not leaf:
  CHANNEL(in=li, out=lo)                  !   Create channels
  CHANNEL(in=ri, out=ro)                  !   for child processes
  PROCESSES                               !   Create children:
    PROCESSCALL tree(id, n/2, lo)         !     Left subtree
    PROCESSCALL tree(id+n/2, n/2, ro)     !     Right subtree
    call nonleaf(id, li, ri, toparent)    !     Node
  ENDPROCESSES                            !
else                                      ! If leaf:
  call leaf(id, toparent)                 !   Create leaf process
endif                                     !
end                                       ! End of process
```

Program 6.3 : FM formulation of a tree-structured computation.

Next: 6.4 Unstructured Communication **Up:** 6 Fortran M **Previous:** 6.2 Concurrency